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JAN-22-1951

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY

EXHIBITION

"Industrial Design 1951 B.C. - A.D. 1951"

The basic sponsors of this exhibition are the National Gallery of Canada and the National Industrial Design Committee. Its first opening and the showing in Toronto are sponsored by the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology. The Exhibition is demountable, and it is intended that the Toronto showing should be followed by others in the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, and in many other cities and towns across the country.

The sponsors and the Museum are glad of this opportunity to express their grateful thanks for help in the form of money, of objects made available, and of materials for mounting and help in it, to the T. Eaton Company, the Robert Simpson Company and the Ryerson Institute of Technology.

This Exhibition is unlike the normal Royal Ontario Museum Exhibition in both form and content. The fact that it is to be circulated elsewhere in Canada involves the use of demountable photographic panels. Museum objects are included as illustrations of what is shown photographically on the panels. As to content, we must point out that no Museum such as this can serve its real purpose and yet remain entirely aloof from the modern developments of the type of object in its permanent collections. Like all others, this Museum exists to give service to the community, not merely for the accumulation of objects; the stress of its collections is on the good in quality rather than necessarily on the old.

This explains the Museum's interest in the modern design movement. It is often said that Industrial Design is an entirely new conception: this Exhibition is planned in the belief that that statement is mistaken. Good design is not a 20th century idea; it is something at which the makers of objects have, by their own lights, always aimed. It is not concerned only with externals — the idea suggested by the word "styling" — but with the whole form of the object. The keynotes of good design were defined 2000 years ago in the three words "Appearance; Performance; Production". That is; Is it attractive? Does it work? Can it be successfully produced in the chosen medium? These are the three questions which maker, seller and buyer of any object have to consider: a good design answers 'yes' to all three.

This Exhibition endeavours to show how design has developed, from Ancient Egypt to our own day. The first section deals briefly with the development up to the early 19th century. The so-called 'Industrial Revolution' of that time, with its enormous social and economic changes, was a period of great practical achievement but of chaos in design; the history of the last 75 years is one of successive attempts to find a true basis for design again. One of these, pioneered by the so-called 'Bauhaus' in Germany, has been the most lasting in its effects, and a panel is devoted to it. This is followed by a series of panels devoted to modern design in various classes of objects.

The Exhibition ends with a series of panels containing statements by the Council of Industrial Design and the Society of Industrial Artists in Great Britain, the Institute of Design and the Society of Industrial Designers in the U.S.A., the National Industrial Design Committee and the Association of Canadian Industrial Designers in Canada itself. This is the first occasion on which many of these societies have contributed to any exhibition not under their own direct supervision.

The modern section of the Exhibition, like the historical, is supplemented by a number of actual objects. Most important of these is a group of modern chairs showing the development from the first tubular frame chair, dated 1925 and made by Marcel Breuer, lent by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, to chairs designed in 1950.

At the entrance to the Exhibition is a series of fourteen cartoons by Vernon Jacques.

The following is a list of the panels in the Exhibition. Section one is on the visitor's left-hand as he reaches the entrance:

1. Appearance, Performance, Production, Presentation.
2. Four Design Failings.
3. The Stone Age and Egypt.
4. The Bronze Age.
5. The Classical Period.
6. The Mediaeval Period.
7. The Renaissance.
8. Sources of Power.
9. Traditions in Machines.
10. Calligraphy and Typography.
11. Traditions in Handcraft.
12. The Victorian Era.
13. Victorian Chaos.
14. The Bauhaus.
15. Significant Early Developments.
16. Selected New Designs.
17. Factors in the New Programme.
18. Design in Lighting.
19. Design for Transportation.
20. Furniture Design.
21. Design in Utensils.
22. Tools and Implements.
23. Building Equipment.
24. Design for Product Presentation.
25. The Canadian Design Index.
26. Profession, Promotion, Education, Consumers.
27. Institute of Design.
28. Society of Industrial Designers.
29. Society of Industrial Designers.
30. Society of Industrial Artists.
31. Council of Industrial Design.
32. C. I. D. Exhibitions.
33. Association of Canadian Industrial Designers.
34. National Industrial Design Committee.
35. Canadian Industrial Design needs YOU.